

Message Text

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S E C R E T USNATO 6299

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: DRC MULTILATERAL REVIEW - PORTUGAL

REF: USNATO 5499

SUMMARY. ON NOVEMBER 12, DRC REVIEWED PORTUGUESE 1975-79 FORCE PLANS PRESENTED IN PORTUGUESE REPLY TO DPQ(74). CHAIRMAN BRIEFLY REVIEWED HIGHLIGHTS OF PORTUGUESE RESPONSE AND NOTED UNCERTAINTIES IT REFLECTS. MILITARY AUTHORITIES' AND DRC REPS' COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS EMPHASIZED HOPE FOR GREATER PORTUGUESE CONTRIBUTION TO NATO AND NEED FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN PORTUGUESE FORCES STRUCTURE AND CAPABILITIES. END SUMMARY.

1. DRC CHAIRMAN (HUMPHREYS) BEGAN 1974 MULTIALTERAL EXAMINATION OF 1975-79 PORTUGUESE FORCE PLANS BY SUMMARIZING DRAFT COUNTRY CHAPTER AND POINTING OUT THAT PORTUGUESE RESPONSE, PARTICULARLY FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC SECTION, LEAVES MANY UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT PORTUGUESE FORCE PLANS. HE HIGHLIGHTED
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FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. ARMY IS MEETING ITS 1974 NATO COMMITMENT, ALTHOUGH ITS COMMITMENT IS SMALL AND ITS EQUIPMENT IS OUTDATED. GOP IS, HOWEVER, CONSIDERING NATO FORCE GOAL TO REPLACE PRESENT IN-

FANTRY DIVISION WITH ONE MODERN AIRBORNE INFANTRY BRIGADE.

B. NAVY MEETS 1974 COMMITMENT OF FOUR DESTROYER ESCORTS. NAVY'S OPERATIONAL READINESS, MANNING LEVELS AND WAR RESERVES ARE GOOD.

C. AIR FORCE IS NOT MEETING ITS MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT (MPA) COMMITMENT TO NATO.

D. FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC SECTION OF DPQ(74) RESPONSE REVEALS ONLY TRENDS IN DEFENSE SPENDING SINCE CURRENT 33 PERCENT INFLATION LEVEL IN PORTUGAL INVALIDATES REPORTED FIGURES.

E. WHILE PORTUGUESE DEFENSE SPENDING AT 6.4 PERCENT OF GNP IS HIGH, GOP SPENDS VERY LITTLE OF IT IN NATO; PORTUGUESE CONTRIBUTION TO NATO IS POOR BY ANY STANDARD.

2. MC REP (GEN TOMMASINI) EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GOP WILL ESTABLISH IMPROVED MILITARY PLANNING PROCEDURES AND WILL REVISE SUBSTANTIALLY ITS DEFENSE EFFORTS IN FUTURE. SHAPE REP (COL HOOTEN) SUGGESTED THAT PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT OBTAIN ASSISTANCE IN PLANNING PROPOSED NEW BRIGADE FROM AFSOUTH AND CINC-SOUTH. SACLANC REP (CAPT MAYO) EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GOP WILL PROVIDE MORE FORCES TO SACLANC IN FUTURE.

3. PORTUGUESE REP (CATARINO) MADE GENERAL REMARKS FROM PREPARED TEXT. HE NOTED THAT MILITARY PLANNING IS GUIDED BY POLITICAL FACTORS AND CITED RECENT CHANGE OF PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AS IMPORTANT POLITICAL FACTOR. HE SAID GOP CAN INCREASE CONTRIBUTION TO NATO AS IT SOLVES CURRENT PROBLEMS IN OVERSEAS TERRITORIES. HE NOTED THAT PORTUGAL MUST RESTRUCTURE FORCES WITHDRAWN FROM OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND THAT REPRESENTATIVES FROM PORTUGAL VISITED FRANCE RECENTLY SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO FORCE STRUCTURE PROBLEMS. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT A DELEGATION FROM NATO IS COULD GO TO LISBON NEXT YEAR FOR TRI-LATERAL EXAMINATIONS AND THAT SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE CAREFULLY PLANNED SO AS TO BE FRUITFUL. NOTING GENERAL COSTA GOMES STATEMENT TO DPC LAST YEAR CONCERNING FORCE PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD REQUIRE FOREIGN AID, HE ASSURED DRC THAT PORTUGAL WOULD PROVIDE MORE SUPPORT FOR NATO AND FORCE IMPROVEMENTS, BUT SAID FUTURE COMMITMENTS WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT OUTCOME OF
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ELECTIONS PLANNED FOR 1975. LTC PEREZ, WHO ACCOMPANIED PORTUGUESE REP, COMMENTED THAT GOP STILL HAS COMMITMENTS TO OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND IS, THEREFORE, IN A TRANSITION ERA; THUS PORTUGAL CANNOT PROVIDE A FIXED TIMETABLE FOR ADDITIONAL NATO COMMITMENTS. HE SAID GOP NEEDS TIME TO ADAPT TO CHANGING CONDITIONS IN ORDER TO INCREASE SUBSTANTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO NATO.

4. US REP (CLINARD) SAID THAT US WELCOMES INDICATIONS THAT PORTUGAL WILL IN FUTURE BE ABLE TO DEVOTE MORE RESOURCES TO NATO. HE SAID US HOPES PORTUGAL WILL DEVOTE THESE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO HIGH PRIORITY FORCE IMPROVEMENTS, AND IN PARTICULAR TO IMPROVEMENTS IN NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS AND

ELECTRONIC WARFARE CAPABILITIES. PORTUGUESE REP RESPONDED THAT GOP HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH US AND HAS OBTAINED SOME COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT.

5. CANADIAN REP (COL SHEFFIELD) NOTED THAT MODERNIZING AND RESTRUCTURING PORTUGUESE FORCES SUGGESTS NECSSITY OF PROVIDING SIMILAR INCREASE IN SOPHISTICATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES. PORTUGUESE REP RESPONDED THAT GOP HAS BEEN UNABLE TO IMPLEMENT SOME NATIONAL PLANS DUE TO REQUIREMENTS TO PREPARE FOR SUBVERSIVE WAR RATHER THAN CONVENTIONAL WAR. HE SAID THAT INFUTUE, GOP WILL ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE APPROPRIATE TRAINING PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES ALONG WITH NEW EQUIPMENT.

6. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY UK REP (BEAUMONT), PORTUGUESE REP SAID THAT THE LOW PERCENT OF REGULARS IN THE MILITARY (7 PERCENT), WAS DUE TO NECESSITY IN PAST OF CONSCRIPTING LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE FOR SERVICE IN OVERSEAS TERRITORIES. HE SAID THAT PORTUGUESE FORCES WILL HAVE A HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF REGULARS IN FUTURE IF OVERSEAS NEEDS DECREASE AS GOP ANTICIPATES.

7. INCLOSING REMARKS, CHAIRMAN THANKED PORTUGUESE REP FOR HIS OPENING STATEMENT, BUT OBSERVED THAT NATO MUST WITHHOLD JUDGMENT TO SEE WHAT THE FUTURE PORTUGUESE CONTRIBUTION TO NATO WILL BE. PEREZ

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